

Aztecs of Mexico

555 finely graded scale of social eminence. (See Plates 33-36.)

425 A married man received a plot of land directly from the
511 clan or else took over his father's fields if the latter were too old to work. Diligent husbandry, eked out by making stone tools, pottery or practicing some such craft for barter, could produce a good living. Unmarried men helped their fathers and were able to add to their prestige by taking part in the numerous military campaigns.

[721] Since the capture of victims for sacrifice was the chief
555 glory of war, an able soldier who could subdue his enemies and drag them to the rear received much honor. According to the number of captives taken, a warrior had the right to wear an increasingly elaborate costume. Consistently success-

• [575] ful warriors could enter an order, like the Knights of the Eagle or the Ocelot (often referred to as Tiger), which performed special dances and rituals. Sometimes a warrior of unusual prowess received additional grants of land or more often obtained an increased portion of the clan's share of tribute. Having reached an established position by this means, he had a more important voice in clan councils and might attain a seat in the council itself. A special honorific, *tecubtli*
[554] (grandfather), which corresponds to chief among the North American Indians, distinguished these men. The title signified high social, but not official, rank, and from these men who had distinguished themselves by probity, bravery and religious observance, high elective and appointive posts were filled.*

624 In this stratum there were many positions of honor and influence, which, like petty political offices in small North American towns, were held in connection with some other means of livelihood. There were officials who kept order in the markets and tribunals which settled disputes in clan